ZOHO

**Enterprise cloud implementation:**

# Mitigating challenges through cross-functional collaboration

# To experience the full range of benefits a centralized cloud solution provides, businesses must take a collaborative approach at every stage of implementation.

Across industries, executives are embracing centralized cloud platforms, aiming to improve business productivity and agility—but too often, cloud implementations fall short of expectations. Fewer than 10% of businesses have successfully moved their critical processes to the cloud[1], and only 20-30% are using their cloud solutions regularly and at scale[2].

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> *A mere 30% of executives feel they have achieved the outcomes they expected from their cloud initiatives.*
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> [HBR, 2021]

A lack of transparency around procedures, policies, and stakeholder needs can be detrimental to the adoption of any software solution. And with a solution as complex and consequential as a centralized cloud platform, the success or failure of implementation will impact multiple departments. To mitigate implementation challenges and extract greater value from cloud-based solutions, business leaders must consider a range of stakeholder perspectives and encourage collaboration around the planning and adoption of relevant policies.

## Encouraging employee buy-in through a collaborative selection process

A centralized cloud solution can deliver significant advantages to an organization—such as visibility, accountability, and security—but these cannot be attained without employee buy-in. Ensuring that the chosen solution supports each team's essential processes and goals is a crucial first step toward consistent org-wide adoption. If the org-approved solution proves inadequate, employees are more likely to turn toward department-specific and unsanctioned applications, often referred to as Shadow IT. In addition to exacerbating data silos, these applications leave nearly 7 in 10 businesses vulnerable to security threats[3].

[1] McKinsey & Co., 2023 | [2] McKinsey & Co., 2023       [3] IBM, 2022

Conversations around stakeholder requirements prior to software procurement can increase support for an IT-vetted, company-approved solution. By inviting members of each department to outline their needs, leadership improves its chances of investing in a cloud platform that is exactly as flexible, intuitive, capable, and interoperable as they require.

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> *Alignment between departmental processes and overarching organizational goals is critical when adopting any new software solution. Encouraging this alignment early on paves the way for a smooth and successful transition.*

**Vijay Sundaram**
Chief Strategy Officer at Zoho

A collaborative selection process also gives members of the organization a sense of what the implementation is meant to accomplish. Transparency around big-picture goals provides employees with a clear reason to invest in a successful implementation, and motivates them to overcome points of friction during the adoption phase.

## Addressing the cloud skills gap through reskilling and upskilling initiatives

Demand for IT employees with cloud experience has increased dramatically in recent years, leading to a shortage of candidates skilled in developing and securing cloud frameworks. This presents a challenge to modern businesses, with 80% of IT leaders noting that inadequate employee skillsets are preventing their companies from expanding their cloud environments[4].

Through reskilling and upskilling initiatives, org leaders can tap into their existing talent pools to close the gaps in their workforces. Training courses and professional development programs can be used to foster more relevant skillsets in seasoned

[4] Deloitte, 2022

employees who are already familiar with the company's operations, goals, and culture. Retaining these employees contributes to a sense of continuity, even as the company's processes and technology evolve.



Connecting with employees, either informally or through organized meetings, makes it easier for leadership to determine which skills are underdeveloped at their companies and identify candidates that are suited to new, more cloud-centric roles. Continuous communication can also reveal the ways in which cloud resources are being under-utilized at the organization. This information is particularly useful when designing educational initiatives that optimize returns on a company's investment in their cloud solution.

## Securing data through comprehensive governance policies

A centralized cloud platform makes files more broadly accessible, improving data democratization, decision-making, and cross-functional collaboration. But without clear data governance policies in place, data misuse and privacy breaches can occur. Data control in the cloud remains a primary concern among executives[5], and uncertainty around related processes often erodes team members' trust, making them hesitant to rely on the cloud solution for critical operations and high-value tasks.



To effectively secure and structure their cloud environments, organizations must focus on designing and disseminating clear protocols for data access. This will likely involve discussions with various teams to determine who should be in charge of which data, and how it can be used and shared appropriately.

[5] Deloitte, 2022

Zoho's culture of security is built on stringent protocols for app development, data encryption, and org-wide data handling. We prioritize privacy to ensure that your data governance policies are supported and strengthened by your technology.

Most cloud solutions allow organizations to assign role-based access permissions to their files. But to circumvent confusion and frustration, it is crucial that organizations look beyond technological restrictions to ensure security. All team members have a responsibility when it comes to protecting organizational data, and therefore, can benefit from conversations about the data they are permitted to share, with whom, and through which channels.

## Promoting success through communication and responsiveness

As with any major organizational change, the shift to a centralized cloud platform is rarely achieved without obstacles. But by maintaining open lines of communication with key stakeholders, business leaders are better equipped to address challenges as they arise, rather than allowing them to escalate to the point of becoming insurmountable.

When implemented effectively, a centralized cloud solution will impact nearly every team within an organization. Only by increasing transparency around the nature of these impacts, and remaining attuned and responsive to stakeholder needs, can businesses align the reality of their implementations with their original expectations.
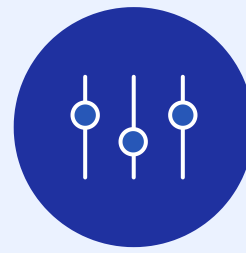
# Why Zoho for Enterprise?

Proven software, customer commitment, tremendous value.
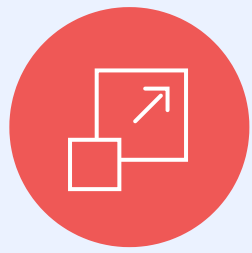
## Scalability & Reliability

Zoho for Enterprise reduces the cost of infrastructure, unifies existing apps, and solves complex business problems for increased enterprise fitness, resilience, and scalability.

## Customization & Extensibility

Through granular customizations and powerful in-house developer platforms, Zoho lets you orchestrate workflows, streamline data management, and deploy world-class solutions at scale.

## Security & Privacy

From owning our own data centers to GDPR compliance features, Zoho enables enterprise organizations to focus on core business priorities, rather than data management.

## Enterprise Services

From data migration to consultation and implementation, our team is armed with the in-depth product knowledge and industry expertise to meet your unique technical requirements.

## Are you ready to transform your organization?

We're here to help. Have a 15-minute, no-obligation call with one of our **Business Architects** to get all your questions answered.

Find us at **zoho.com/enterprise.**  |  ZOHO